

# **Meeting Minutes of the City of Milpitas Campaign Finance Reform Committee**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

5:00 PM

Milpitas City Hall, Committee Room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor  
455 E. Calaveras Boulevard, Milpitas, CA

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Jose Esteves called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Esteves, City Manager Tom Williams, City Attorney Mike Ogaz, City Clerk Mary Lavelle were present.

**Committee Members present:** Althea Polanski, Bill Ferguson, Bob Nunez, Martha Lamdin, Marty Riker, Rajeev Madnawat, Rohit Sharma, and Syed Mohsin

**Committee Member absent:** Lokesh Krishnarajpet

Mayor Esteves thanked all the members for serving on this Committee. He expressed his view that the Committee could identify modifications to the current campaign finance ordinance in Milpitas, which the City Council may then consider. He hoped to ensure that votes were a reflection of the voters' wishes and of no undue influence. For the betterment of the residents of Milpitas, donations to campaigns should not be for any non-City purposes, the Mayor felt.

The Committee would not be the forum for discussion of other issues, beyond the local campaign finance regulations. Mayor Esteves suggested a six months time frame for the group to meet in the current year. He hoped the members might recommend a way to minimize undue influence or special interests.

Topics suggested by committee members included: publicly financed campaigns, a maximum spending limit, disclosure and accountability, and consideration of other cities' regulations on these subjects.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Rohit Sharma moved to nominate Althea Polanski to serve as Chair of the Committee. His motion was seconded by Martha Lamdin, and the group voted unanimously to approve her as Chair.

Syed Mohsin moved to nominate Bill Ferguson as Vice Chair. His motion was seconded by Marty Riker, and the group voted unanimously to approve him as Vice Chair.

## **OVERVIEW BY CITY ATTORNEY**

City Attorney Mike Ogaz shared recent history of campaign finance law in Milpitas, including the ordinance that requires a \$250 maximum dollar limit for donations to candidates' campaign committees, per election. He noted those committees that were independent of a candidate's committee were not limited to that donation amount. Mr. Ogaz reminded the Committee that there were a variety of state and federal laws that may impact the capacity of the city to regulate donations and expenditures. He summarized the Brown Act requirements for the Committee.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Committee members discussed various ways to proceed. Ultimately, the Chair asked for specific information to be provided by staff, in advance of the next meeting, and to specify items for the next agenda. Materials requested were: blank campaign committee forms, ordinances adopted and repealed by City Council on campaign finance, actual filed forms from a candidate, a political action committee

(PAC) and one measure committee. Chair Polanski would also provide a spreadsheet analyzing some spending patterns for elected officials in recent elections in Milpitas. Also at the next meeting, it was recommended that the groups form Subcommittees to investigate regulations of other cities, and other relevant topics.

The next meeting agenda was identified to include: Historical Perspective, What's Broken?, Overview of the FPPC Forms and Filing, Idea Brainstorming for Reform, Form Subcommittees and Adjournment.

The Committee adjourned at 6:30 PM, and agreed to convene next on Monday, March 16 at 6:00 PM.

*Meeting minutes prepared  
by Mary Lavelle, City Clerk*